

In the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1. (currently amended) A handle assembly comprising a handle, a handle spigot to which the handle is attached, a biasing member to bias the handle to a naturally closed position, an operating plate which is rotatable by the handle spigot, a mounting stock, and a housing which is engaged at one end region to the handle spigot and which can be secured at an opposed end region to the mounting stock, the biasing member, operating plate and portions of the mounting stock and the spigot being positioned within the housing once the housing is fitted to the mounting stock, and wherein the handle is secured to the mounting stock through engagement of the housing with the mounting stock.
2. (previously presented) The handle assembly as claimed in claim 1, wherein the handle comprises a lever handle that may be a left-hand lever handle or a right-hand lever handle.
3. (original) The handle assembly as claimed in claim 1, wherein the handle spigot comprises a head portion and an elongate tail portion, the head portion adapted to fit to the handle.
4. (original) The handle assembly as claimed in claim 3, wherein the head portion is angled and fits within a socket or recess in the handle.

5. (original) The handle assembly as claimed in claim 3, the tail portion is substantially tubular or cylindrical in configuration and has a length of between 10-100 millimetres and a diameter of between 4-20 millimetres, and has an internal configuration to engage with a conventional spindle.

6. (original) The handle assembly as claimed in claim 5, wherein the tail portion is provided with engagement means to engage with or to the operating plate.

7. (original) The handle assembly as claimed in claim 6, wherein the tail portion has a slot/groove/recess to engage with a projection on the operating plate, or the tail portion is provided with a projection and the operating plate is provided with a corresponding slot/groove/recess.

8. (previously presented) The handle assembly as claimed in claim 3, wherein the biasing member comprises a spring which extends about the tail portion of the handle spigot and has means to engage with a stop provided in the housing and engagement means provided on the operating plate to bias the spigot and therefore the handle to a naturally closed position.

9. (original) The handle assembly as claimed in claim 1, including a mounting plate which comprises a disk like member formed with a central opening containing engagement means to engage with the handle spigot.

10. (original) The handle assembly as claimed in claim 1, wherein the mounting stock comprises an end member which at least partially passes into the housing.

11. (previously presented) The handle assembly as claimed in claim 10, wherein the mounting stock is provided with at least one fixture opening to enable the mounting stock to be secured to a mortise lock, a tubular latch or another locking or latching member.

12. (original) The handle assembly as claimed in claim 1, wherein the housing comprises a substantially hollow cylindrical barrel which has an inner end which is substantially open and an outer end which is formed with a bore, whereby the inner end, in use, fits over the mounting stock, and the handle spigot passes at least partially through the bore in the outer end, the housing being attached to the mounting stock.

13. (original) A lock or latch including a handle assembly as claimed in claim 1.

14. (currently amended) A handle assembly including a handle, a housing and a mounting stock, a handle spigot to which the handle is attached, which secures the handle to one end region of the housing through engagement of the handle spigot to the housing; a biasing member which is associated with the handle spigot and with the housing and which biases the handle to a naturally closed position relative to the housing, an operating plate which is rotatable by the handle spigot relative to the housing, and the housing can be secured to the mounting stock by fitting the housing to the mounting stock so that the mounting stock extends at least partly into an end of the housing which opposes the end which is adjacent the handle, the biasing member and the operating plate being positioned within the housing, and wherein the handle can be disengaged from the mounting stock by detaching the housing from the mounting stock.

15. (currently amended) A handle assembly comprising a handle, a handle spigot to which the handle is attached, a biasing member to bias the handle to a naturally closed position, an operating plate which is rotatable by the handle spigot, a mounting stock, and a housing having a bore at one end region through which a tail end of the handle spigot is passed, the handle spigot can be engaged at one end region of the housing and which-the housing can be secured at an opposed end region to the mounting stock, the biasing member, operating plate and portions of the mounting stock and the spigot being positioned within the housing once the housing is fitted to the mounting stock, and wherein the handle is secured to the mounting stock through engagement of the housing with the mounting stock.